

MEDIA RELEASE

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\$168,200 OTF Capital & Seed Grants from the Ontario Government Reduces Barriers for Artists at The Toronto Animated Image Society

Toronto, ON – In June, the members of the Toronto Animated Image Society had an opportunity to speak to the impact of two grants it had received from the provincial government's Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) in 2024: a \$68,300 Capital grant and \$99,900 Seed grant. The grants were used to make the facility, organization, and its programming more accessible for artists in the animation community. The project has not only reduced physical barriers by allowing for the construction of an entry ramp and accessible washroom, workstations, and equipment storage, but is also supporting the creation of a 10-week stop-motion animation program geared towards artists with disabilities taking place this summer.

"This work would not have been possible without the support of the Ontario Trillium Foundation," said Isaac King. "Both grants have been key in expanding opportunities for animation artists with disabilities, and for a broader general public to experience independent and experimental animation at TAIS. Our community is truly grateful and will benefit from these improvements for years to come."

The 14 yearly programs and services impacted by the renovation and made possible by OTF's Capital grant now includes access for disabled, low-income populations that are currently directly served by TAIS. Accessibility renovations will increase participation, bringing these populations to the centre more often and growing reach through their networks.

The Seed grant brought to fruition a pilot project that addresses accessibility in both policy and programs. TAIS is taking an integrated research approach in conducting a stop motion animation to experiment and troubleshoot in an applied setting at the TAIS facility, involving Hilary Martin Projects, Frame x Frame collective, consultants, artists with disabilities, TAIS membership, and members of the public. The resulting program involves participants co-designing a stop motion course based on their specific needs and informing standard accessibility practices to benefit artist studios across the province.

The Toronto Animated Image Society (TAIS) is an artist-run production centre where independent artists come to create, explore, research, and develop skills in traditional and experimental animation techniques. Their public programming presents animation to audiences, conducts workshops & courses led by experienced animators, and hosts a variety of artists in residence each year who present their work publicly via artist talks. To find out more, visit their website at www.tais.ca.

"Whether it's helping people learn new things, connect with their community, or simply have fun, organizations like the Toronto Animated Image Society deliver experiences that make a difference," said Stan Cho, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Gaming. "That's why grant support through the Ontario Trillium Foundation is so important. This funding will help ensure that it remains at the heart of the community for decades to come."

The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) is an agency of the Ontario government with a mission to build healthy and vibrant communities across the province. Last year, OTF invested nearly \$105M into 732 community projects and multi-sector partnerships. Projects aim to enhance economic well-being, foster more active lifestyles, support child and youth development, provide spaces for people to come together and connect, and create a more sustainable environment. Visit otf.ca to learn more.

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